

Referee Centers Fact Sheet

JUNE 2003

A Referee Center is a state-contracted vehicle emissions test facility that provides certain Smog Check services for motorists. A Referee Center is authorized to offer specialized inspection services that are beyond the scope of California's licensed Smog Check stations. Referee Centers are located primarily at California Community Colleges throughout the state.

Referee Centers also provide training and work experience opportunities. The Bureau of Automotive Repair (BAR) trains referees and provides technical direction and equipment. Referees also train students and welfare recipients for careers in the automotive industry.

Referee Centers:

1. Inspect Vehicles with Engine Changes, Gray Market Vehicles, and Specially Constructed Vehicles

Engine Changes.

Vehicles whose original engines have been replaced with an engine not originally offered for that vehicle's year, make, or model.

Gray Market Vehicles.

Vehicles imported into the United States that do not meet U. S. EPA standards.

Specially Constructed Vehicles.

Vehicles, such as dune buggies or kit cars, that are deemed "specially constructed" by the DMV.

Once these vehicles are inspected and certified by a Referee Center, a BAR label will be affixed to the vehicle. Any licensed Smog Check station may perform subsequent inspections as long as the BAR label remains in place and the vehicle's emissions equipment remains the same.

2. Certify Vehicles with Limited Parts Exemptions

Motorists whose vehicles fail a Smog Check because of missing or modified emission-related parts, must replace those parts. The BAR's Emissions Parts Locator service helps motorists locate difficult to find emissions parts or if the parts cannot be found, a Limited Parts Exemption is issued. When a Limited Parts Exemption is issued, the motorist must take his or her vehicle to a Referee Center for inspection. If it passes all other aspects of the Smog Check inspection, the vehicle will be certified. If the parts are available in time for the next required smog inspection, they must be installed before the vehicle can be certified. BAR's Emissions Parts Locator service can be reached at (800) 826-3566.

3. Issue Smog Check Repair Cost Waivers

Repair Cost Waivers are available to everyone who has a vehicle that fails a biennial inspection and who's emission system has not been tampered with. It allows a vehicle to be registered without passing its

Smog Check inspection by providing a temporary (two year) extension of time to complete all emissions-related repairs. To qualify, at least \$450 in emissions-related repairs must be made to the vehicle at a licensed Smog Check station. The waiver may only be used once by a motorist during their ownership of the vehicle.

Note: Prior to applying for a Repair Cost Waiver, consumers should apply for the Smog Check Consumer Assistance Program. Click [here](#) to learn more about CAP, which provides up to \$500 in Smog Check repair assistance to eligible motorists.

To Make a Referee Appointment

Call (800) 622-7733 to schedule an appointment with a Referee Center. The Referee will charge a fee for the Smog Check inspections and services performed.

Referee Centers also offer:

1. Training and Work Experience Opportunities

Referees also provide training opportunities. Training includes career path information in the automotive industry with emphasis on obtaining a smog technician license.

2. Student Lane Technician Program

Referee Centers offer paid, on-the-job, smog technician training to qualified students. For more information on this program, call the Community College Foundation Operations Manager at (916) 418-5200.

3. Work Experience Program

The California Community Foundation (CCF), under the direction of BAR, and in cooperation with California's CalWorks program, provides welfare recipients on-the-job training at Referee Centers. Before being admitted to the ten-week, 400-hour, hands-on program, participants must show they possess the ability to read, write, interpret, make simple calculations, and understand basic records and correspondence. They must be able to apply practical mathematics and basic problem-solving methods. When participants complete the program, they may mentor new trainees.

Training May Include:

1. Office Work
2. Safety
3. Equipment Maintenance and Use
4. Vehicle Inspection
5. Emissions Diagnostics

The participants demonstrate their learned experience through performance and evaluations. After successful completion, participants receive a certificate, a referral letter and help finding jobs. For more information about this program, contact the CCF Work Experience Coordinator at (800) 757-2907.